

In the Claims:

Please amend claims 19 and 22, and add new claims 27-29 as follows:

1-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently amended) A magnetic head comprising:

a slider having a rail with a top surface;

a thin-film element part ~~for writing and reading~~ to write and read information,  
formed on an end of said rail top surface of said slider; and

a protective film formed on said thin-film element part and defining a distal  
end of the rail whereby air exits said slider at said distal end, ~~said protective film having an  
end surface between at least two recesses, said thin-film element being positioned outside  
and between said recesses and on said end surface, said recesses being formed within a width  
of said rail and extending to said distal end defined by said protective film.~~

said protective film having a recess which extends from said thin-film element  
part towards said distal end,

said recess being lower than said rail top surface and having a width defined by  
a width of said rail.

20-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently amended) A magnetic disk apparatus comprising:

a head supporting part ~~for carrying~~to carry a magnetic head claimed in claim 19, ~~for writing and reading information to enable~~to write and read information by enabling said head to float over a recording medium;

an arm part on which said head supporting part is ~~fitted~~provided; and

a driving part ~~for moving~~to move said arm part over said recording medium.

23-26. (Cancelled)

27. (New) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 19, wherein said recess has a top surface substantially parallel to said rail top surface.

28. (New) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 19, wherein said recess has a tapered top surface.

29. (New) The magnetic head as claimed in claim 19, wherein said recess has a curved top surface.

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